

EPA's Beach Sampling at the Cathedral Park Project Area

September 2021

The Cathedral Park Project Area is part of the larger Portland Harbor site (about 10 miles of the Lower Willamette River) that the Environmental Protection Agency classified in 2000 as a Superfund site; an area that EPA prioritizes for cleanup due to known releases or threatened releases of hazardous substances, pollutants, or contaminants. The Harbor sediments (river bottom), groundwater, surface water, and riverbanks were contaminated in some areas with toxic chemicals from over a century of industrial activity. As part of Portland Harbor Superfund Site cleanup work, EPA is conducting sampling of the Cathedral Park Project Area, including the beach.

Why is EPA sampling in the Cathedral Park beach area?

Initial sampling was done on the beach in 2002, and we want to confirm that contaminant concentrations have remained the same or decreased since then.

Is it safe for me to use the beach at the Cathedral Park Project Area? Is it safe to swim in the water?

Based on all data collected to date, there is a very low risk to children or adults who play on the beach or wade on the shore of the river at Cathedral Park.

Who doing the beach sampling?

EPA's technical contractor, CDM Smith, will be performing the beach sampling with EPA oversight.

Where will the beach sampling take place?

EPA plans to take beach samples at the Cathedral Park Project Area and will divide the sampling work into four Decision Units (DUs) that are depicted in Figure 2. ⇨

When will the beach sampling at the Cathedral Park Project Area take place? EPA plans to conduct the beach sampling on September 15, 16, and 17 (if needed), 2021.

What is Incremental Sampling Methodology and why is EPA doing the beach sampling this way at the Cathedral Park Project Area?

ISM is a technique to get a more representative sample of the area. Small amounts of material will be collected from the top 6" of sand throughout the beach at the Cathedral Park Project Area in 50 locations (or increments) within each decision unit shown above (see Figure 2). These increments will be mixed to create a single representative sample for each decision unit (see Figure 3). These samples will then be sent to a lab where they will be analyzed for contaminants of concern.

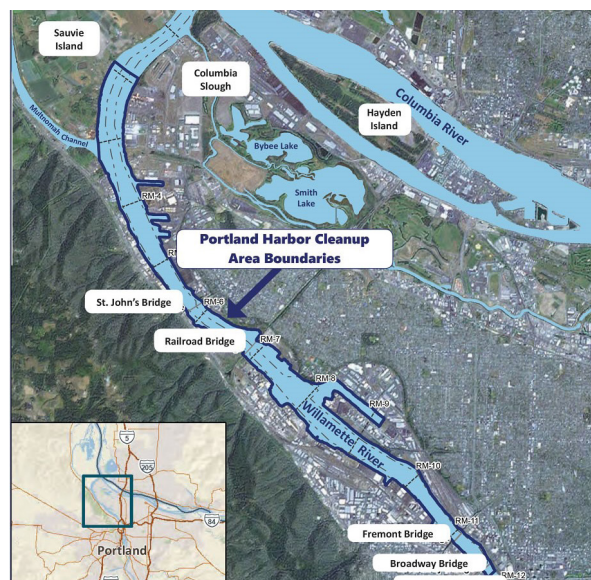


Figure 1: Map showing the cleanup area for the Portland Harbor Superfund Site.

Source: U.S. EPA

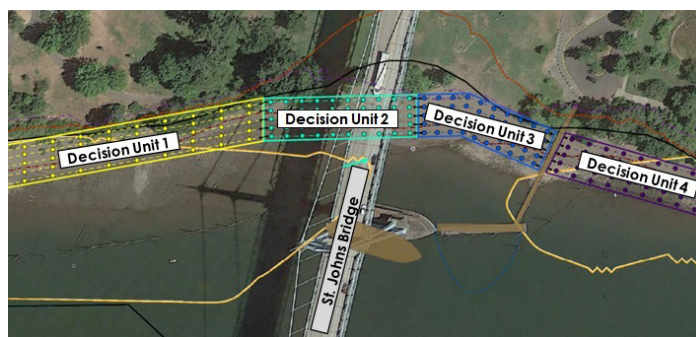


Figure 2: Map showing the four decision units (DUs) that EPA will use for beach sampling at the Cathedral Park Project Area.

Sources: National Geographic, Esri, Garmin, HERE, UNEP-WCMC, USGS, NASA, ESA, METI, NRCAN, GEBCO, NOAA, Increment P Corp.

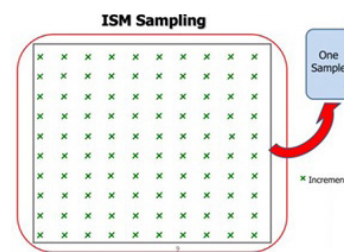


Figure 3: Graphic depicting Incremental Sampling Methodology (ISM) that will be used for each DU at the beach for the Cathedral Park Project Area

Source: Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

What contaminants or chemicals is EPA sampling for on the beach at the Cathedral Park Project Area? EPA will test the beach samples for many contaminants, including the focused contaminants of concern at the Portland Harbor Superfund Site, including polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, pesticides such as DDT, and dioxins/furans. For a full list of the contaminants, please view Table 17 of EPA's final cleanup plan for Portland Harbor that is included within the Final Quality Assurance Project Plan for this Cathedral Park sampling work (on **page 128** of 354 total pages) at <https://go.usa.gov/xMTg8>.

When and where will the results be available? EPA expects to have results to share in spring 2022. The beach sampling results will be available on EPA's Portland Harbor website (www.epa.gov/superfund/portland-harbor) along with a fact sheet to explain the results.

How may I get involved with EPA's work at the Cathedral Park Project Area? Currently, EPA is facilitating a Cathedral Park Project Area Working Group for interested Portland-area community members to discuss community education and engagement opportunities for EPA's sampling work. If you are interested in joining or learning more about this working group, please contact Laura Knudsen, EPA Community Involvement Coordinator, by e-mail (knudsen.laura@epa.gov) or phone/text (206-643-4299). In addition to individual community members, the following groups are currently a part of the working group:

- Portland Harbor Community Advisory Group (CAG): www.willametterivercleanup.com
- Portland Harbor Community Coalition (PHCC): ourfutureriver.org
- Willamette River Advocacy Group: wragpdx.wordpress.com
- Willamette Riverkeeper: willamette-riverkeeper.org
- Portland Audubon: audubonportland.org
- BlueGreen Alliance: www.bluegreenalliance.org
- Braided River Campaign: braidedrivercampaignpdx.org
- Cathedral Park Neighborhood Association: cathedralparkpdx.org
- Friends of Baltimore Woods: www.friendsofbaltimorewoods.org
- Human Access Project: humanaccessproject.com
- Green Anchors: www.greenanchorspdx.com
- East European Coalition: eecnorthamerica.org
- Village Coalition – The City Repair Project: cityrepair.org/village-coalition
- City of Portland: www.portlandoregon.gov/bes/56848
- Oregon Department of Environmental Quality: www.oregon.gov/deq/Hazards-and-Cleanup/CleanupSites/Pages/Portland-Harbor.aspx

What are some additional resources I could review?

- EPA's Portland Harbor Superfund Site website: www.epa.gov/superfund/portland-harbor
- Interstate Technology Regulatory Council's resources on incremental sampling methodology: itrcweb.org/teams/projects/incremental-sampling-methodology

If you need materials in an alternative format, please contact Laura Knudsen at 206-643-4299.